AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) <u>At a business process execution engine,</u> ~~A~~<u>a</u> computer implemented method <u>for dynamically managing business partners in a system that includes a business process application and without requiring the business process application to be modified or recompiled</u>~~of performing a business process~~, the method comprising:

<u>the business process execution engine accessing a compiled business process application that includes selection criteria for selecting business partners, the selection criteria indicating attributes that a business partner is to include to match the selection criteria;</u>

<u>the business process execution engine accessing business partner attributes for a plurality of business partners, each business partner including at least one attribute;</u>

<u>the business process execution engine utilizing the selection criteria to automatically and without user intervention select a first business partner with an attribute that matches the selection criteria such that the first business partner is selected by the business process execution engine and not by a user;</u>

<u>updating an attribute of a second business partner to match the selection criteria subsequent to selecting the first business partner, wherein the attribute update is made without modifying the compiled business process application; and</u>

<u>the business process execution engine utilizing the selection criteria and the updated attribute to automatically and without user intervention select the second business partner such that the second business partner is selected by the business process execution engine and not by the user.</u>

~~(a) running in a business process execution engine a compiled business process application that includes selection criteria for selecting partners; and~~

~~(b) utilizing the selection criteria to dynamically select a partner.~~

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1[[2]], wherein the at least one attribute comprises identifying information.

4. (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1[[2]], wherein the at least one attribute comprises selection information.

5. (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1[[2]], wherein the at least one attribute comprises a digital certificate.

6. (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1[[2]], wherein the at least one attribute comprises custom business partner data.

7. (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1[[2]], wherein the at least one attribute comprises an identification of a preferred document format.

8. (Original)   The method of claim 7, wherein the document format comprises an extensible markup language schema.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended)   The method of claim 1, further comprising, while running the business process application, binding instances of a business partner variable to the business partners. including:

(c) while running the business process application, binding instances of a business partner variable to the partner identified in (b).

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1[[1]], further comprising adding an additional business partner to the plurality of business partners.wherein (c) comprises adding business partners.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1[[1]], further comprising deleting a business partner from the plurality of business partners. wherein (c) comprises deleting business partners.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12 or 13, wherein the adding or deleting is performed by a business partner.(c) comprises modifying attributes of business partners.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1[[1]], wherein the update is provided by a business partner.(c) is performed by at least one business partner.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1[[6]], wherein the at least one attribute comprises price information.

18. (Currently Amended) A computer readable <u>storage</u> medium containing <u>stored</u> computer-executable instructions for causing a computer device to perform <u>the method of claim 1.</u> ~~a business process, the instructions comprise: executing the business process that includes selection criteria for selecting partners such that business partner data can be modified without modifying the business process.~~

19. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented system for performing a business process, the system comprising:

a computer readable storage medium containing a compiled business process application that includes selection criteria for selecting business partners, the selection criteria indicating attributes that a business partner is to include to match the selection criteria;

a computer readable storage medium containing a list of business partners attributes for a plurality of business partners, each business partner including at least one attribute; and attributes of business partners; and

a business process execution engine that executes the business process application and selects business partners from the computer readable medium in accordance with the selection criteria. performs a method for dynamically managing business partners in the system without requiring the business process application to be modified or recompiled, the method comprising:

accessing the compiled business process application;

accessing the business partner attributes;

utilizing the selection criteria to automatically and without user intervention select a first business partner with an attribute that matches the selection criteria such that the first business partner is selected by the business process execution engine and not by the user;

subsequent to an update to the business partner attributes and subsequent to selecting the first business partner, wherein the update corresponds to an attribute of a second business partner, and the update is made without modifying the compiled business process application, utilizing the selection criteria and the updated attribute to automatically and without user intervention select the second business partner such that the second business partner is selected by the business process execution engine and not by the user.

20. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 19, wherein the at least one attribute[[s]] comprises contact information.

21. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 19, wherein the at least one attribute[[s]] comprises price information.

22. (Currently Amended)   The system of claim 19, wherein the <u>at least one </u>attribute[[s]] comprise<u>s</u> an identification of a preferred document format.

23. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein the document format comprises an extensible markup language schema.

24. (New)   The method of claim 1, wherein the compiled business process application is an executable file that is executed by the business process execution engine.